1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

311 Land classification in Okinawa proceeds from the village to the township and then to the whole island. Each class of land in a village has its own grade. By combining these grades a township classification is made. This is done first by village committees determining the grades for each of their classes of land, and then by setting up a table of equivalences after discussion by the committee representing the whole township. Matsuda's first grade dry crop land might be considered by the land classification committee to be equal in quality to Ginoza village's second class land. While there might be only six classifications for any one village, when all these are combined, there may be ten grades for the township. This is shown by the table of correspondences for Matsuda and neighboring villages in Ginoza-son, as of November 1951.

In this illustration, Matsuda's first class rice land is considered second grade on a township wide basis; its sixth grade dry crop land is grade nine, and its first and second class houses are by comparison, grades three and four in the whole township.

311 623 639 With minor variations, the procedures in classifying land are the same in both townships. Each village makes the classification of its own land. This is done by five villagers, chosen by the people for their knowledge and integrity. In Oushichan township, village experts are designated to serve on the township committee.[8] Seven men from the villages are joined by the mayor (sonchō), the vice-mayor (joyaku), the trade and industry section head, the agricultural section head of the township office, a total of seven men, who then determine the township classifications. These committees make inspections of doubtful cases, often after working hours. The field trips usually end [574] up with a sake party.

In Ginoza-son essentially the same procedures are followed. Each village sends representatives, the number being determined by the area of the village. In late 1951, this village-wide committee had 24 members with the township mayor as chairman. Each village prepares its own land classification map. The local classifications, later combined to make a township-wide classification, have the advantage of limiting the range of grades in a small area and of comparing parcels close together.

Occasionally the grade of a plot is changed to correct an error or to make it consistent with an improvement. A new road may make a plot of land more accessible and thus change its grade.

311 651 433 556 In all the villages studied, land classification was important for the same reasons: for tax purposes, for estimating future production, and for the individual farmer, a means of demonstrating tangible wealth.

8 One representative each is chosen from the villages of Oushichan, Aragusuku, Koshihara, and Nakaza villages, one from Oton and Hanashiro combined, one from Asato and Yoza combined, and one from Hinatogawa-ikku and Hinatogawa-niku combined.

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

Their acts are enforced in each of the villages by the headman. 632

The village headman (kuchō) is an intermediary between the people and the township government. He listens to complaints from his people, carries them to the township government for a hearing, and has supervision over official community projects and activities. The headman, like the mayor, is a busy, hardworking man. His pay, insufficient to live on, is midway between a salary and an honorarium. The headman of Hanashiro, for example, received ¥720 per month, Hinatogawa ¥950, and Matsuda ¥2000 a month.[5] The headman usually has a paid clerk (shoki) who works full time and may receive more pay than the headman. The clerk compiles reports of the village population, assists the headman at meetings, and is a general administrative assistant.

The village headman is elected for a period of one year. There is no campaigning. The election generally is preceded by discussions among the heads of households, village elders, the young men's association and the women's association. These discussions reveal the candidates who are able to do the work and have the leisure and the money to undertake the responsibility.

A village headman usually leads a harried life. Most of them regard their term as a duty to be discharged rather than a beginning of a career in office holding. A former village headman of Hanashiro said that, in addition to the formal meetings he attended at the township office, he had to visit the village office at least 15 times a month on some village problem, such as taxes, health and sanitation, or individual complaints. The village headman of Hinatogawa had a constant succession of problems: reports on overdue fishermen, getting water pipe lines from the mountains to the water tank repaired, taking charge of typhoon damage repair, and trying to have small improvements made in the village. The headman is caught between the township officials who need tax money and the villagers who complain that they have so little money with which to pay them. In Matsuda, there was the same multiplication of problems involving taxes, need for extra school supplies or repairs, and road maintenance.

Village headmen belong to no special age group. In one township, they ranged in age from 30 to 52. Age is not a decisive factor in their selection, but reputation, literacy, and friendliness are. Though there is a change in administration each year, the incumbent headman stays on one month after the close of his term until the new one has become accustomed to his duties. In some villages, the clerk is elected at the same time as the village headman.

The village headman does not have, nor does he desire, complete responsibility for administering the village. Two groups are available for advice. The headman will not make decisions on important non-routine matters without consulting them. The first of these, the village council 623

5 For comparative purposes, the minimum wage for young Okinawan girls employed as maids for US personnel was about ¥100 ($9.17) per month.

623 (hyōgiin) is an elected body, while the other, composed of village elders and public spirited men (yūshi) is a more honorary group. Sometimes the council is composed of one man from each neighborhood association. The elders are an unofficial body which because of its prestige is consulted when the headman and the council have an emergency problem and wish to get the advice of the respected men of the village. [554] This group is composed of former village headmen, former members of the village council, and well-known residents, such as retired school teachers or farmers.

The village council, composed of about 10 men, is elected from the male heads of a household. Before the war, members were elder men, but they now include young men as well. The council advises the headman on matters for which he is reluctant to assume full responsibility. If the decision is important enough, the village assembly, composed of all the heads of families over 18 years of age, is consulted. A headman may use the village council to help in defending himself against unpopular decisions. The village headman and the council generally make the final decision on village matters, but any decision involving the expenditure of money is referred to the assembly of household heads.

621 623 622 Village government is democratic. The people know their elected leaders personally. The problems with which the people and their officials are concerned are concrete, and seldom matters of abstract principle. They usually are concerned with local improvements, taxation, and schooling. The people participate in local government through the village assembly, at which they elect the headman and the council members. They can criticize and question decisions and approve proposals for spending money.

A headman can conceal neither his strong points nor his faults. Village government utilizes the principle of group responsibility without sacrificing the principle of individual leadership and a strong respected headman can do much to prevent the formation of cliques within a village. This does not mean that individual antagonisms and differences of opinion do not exist, but they seem to be resolved before they reach the stage of organized opposition.

Village government is not an extension of the family system. The village headman is not the head of one large family. But there is individual leadership, consultation and discussion, and mutual agreement both in the family system and in village government. Family experience has both a private and a public character. The public influences of family life takes the form of tempering the formality and mechanics of government.

621 591 A village is composed of single families. Many have intermarried. All of these families have a certain relationship to one another. They may be friends; they may live in the same neighborhood. Their children are known to one another as classmates, later as members of youth organizations. The families may have other associations, based on a common economic interest in agriculture, fishing, or pig raising. They

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
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soup. Nothing is wasted and leftovers are kept for the next meal. The majority of people are fast eaters, and chopsticks move from bowl to mouth quickly and deftly. Some families eat silently, others enjoy talking during the meal.

Before and after full moon, people like to go out after supper and gather in small groups by the store to talk and smoke or to visit each other. Less running back and forth is observed during dark nights. There is also a seasonal variation in that respect. On cold winter nights, or when it rains, doors are closed early, and visitors slip into the house by the side kitchen door. On warm nights all houses are open, and one can see people sitting in their living room by the light of a kerosene lamp; passers-by just call over and then go in for a chat. Guests are served tea, bits of brown sugar, and other sweets. Men get together at this time and start talking over a cup of sake. A relative or neighbor, bottle in hand, walks in and joins the party. Here and there somebody pulls a samisen out of the corner and starts singing.

Evenings are also the time for village meetings, finance group meetings, family gatherings, and other formal get-togethers. Several times during the week a light shines from the village office or the store office, where some of the village leaders meet to discuss community affairs. In the winter, household-head meetings or other general meetings are called for 8 o'clock; in the summer they do not start until 9 o'clock. In the absence of clocks, few meetings ever start on time.

The young men and women have their get-togethers at the clubhouse in Udenaha. Both sexes attend, sometimes for lectures by a village official on village affairs, sometimes for lessons in bookkeeping and the use of the abacus in business, for which one village leader dedicates his time, or for other educational purposes. Once a week they have a social evening with discussion and sometimes folk dances. On nights when no meetings are scheduled, young men gather at someone's house to smoke, drink, or sing together. If enough sake is available, parties can become noisy. Occasionally a fight or quarrel starts later in the evening after everybody has drunk steadily. Such interruptions on quiet evenings are rare and seldom occur more than once or twice a month. Loud singing at midnight or later, a group of gay men knocking on somebody's door, these are the only disturbances an early sleeper may experience if a party is held somewhere.

By 11 o'clock mosquito nets are hung in the rooms and comforters spread on the floor. Except in the house where men gather to drink, quiet descends over the village around that time. Individuals, however, may be seen until long after midnight. Taira goes to sleep late, and although people claim that everyone gets eight hours of sleep, it

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
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But actually no family is entirely self-sufficient, for each needs to purchase foodstuff as well as ready-made clothes, manufactured mostly in Japan, more substantial building materials, such as better grades of wood, tiles, and cement, tobacco, alcoholic beverages, sweets, toilet articles, some medical supplies, and other luxuries. Farmers buy their tools; students their books and writing materials. Finally, cash is needed to pay taxes.

In addition to the utilization of sugar, pineapple, firewood, and building materials for cash, Tairans also raise pigs for sale to slaughter houses, and some families derive an income from raising silkworms and producing tea. Fishermen sell fish inside and outside the village, and a small group of people are salaried workers or have an income from specialized services.

Village leaders fear dependence on rapidly dwindling forest resources, still the main source of ready cash. They realize that the present modest living conditions of all families could be much improved if Tairans concentrated on increasing the cultivation of subsistence crops and farmed more intensively to raise cash crops. Most people lack this insight, however, and live on a day-to-day basis without much thought of the future. This is an island-wide problem which has the attention of central government agencies, and a great deal of educational propaganda comes to the village through government channels.

AGRICULTURE

The productivity of the land varies not only with its quality but also with the industriousness of the owners. Farmers who show foresight, those who seem to be under less pressure for immediate cash, take off more time from forest work to cultivate fields during planting season. The village headman and council members remind everybody during village meetings and informal discussions that work in the fields should not be neglected. With the approval of the whole community, the first and 15th of each lunar month have been set aside for farming. On these two days it is forbidden to go to the forests to cut wood. Such agreements are usually observed (as a rule), and they help to achieve their purpose but are not completely effective.

Rice is planted and harvested twice a year. The first rice is prepared in January when seeds are put into special beds where they are left to grow into young shoots until March. Until about 30 years ago it was said that all people seeded rice on the same day while prayers were

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
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666 tion itself is arranged and supervised by an *ad hoc* committee. In 1955 written ballots were cast and counted immediately so that the result was known within a few minutes after the last ballot was in.

622 In contrast to a position in the township administration, which carries high status, equivalent to that of a teacher, the village headman's job is considered a community service and carries little prestige. This does not mean that the headman should not be an individual of high qualities. He must be at least 25 years old; he has to have sufficient education, especially knowledge of Japanese writing characters, to read government documents and to do the required clerical work; he has to be a good accountant and must be proficient in working with the abacus, since all tax collections are supervised by him; he must be community minded and able to enforce regulations in a friendly but efficient way. The rewards are small, the salary less than that of most township officials. The office is held most frequently by young men who have not been out of high school too long. Most recent headmen are between 25 and 30 years of age. Serving in this office may mark the beginning of an administrative career, either in the township office, in the village store, or in business outside Taira. The clerk, appointed
624 by the headmen to assist in village administration, is also a young man. He too is likely to be headed toward an administrative career.

621 Each village is subdivided into wards, set up originally by Japanese
624 administration to effect greater control over families through the warden. He is a subagent of the headman, and at present he functions
[203] mainly as a channel for communications, a useful function in a village like Taira, which covers a large geographical area. Regulations, village meetings, and special events are announced through the warden, and he is often called on to collect delinquent taxes. However, he has little authority and functions more as a neighbor who takes care of necessary contacts between residents and the village administration. Ward members elect him to his honorary office for a one-year term.

623 Village affairs are discussed and legislative action concerning the village initiated by the village council. This group is now partly elected, partly composed of holders of essential offices, such as heads of associations, members of the township assembly, and township officials who live in Taira. The 26 members of the Council are responsible for measures affecting the community, and the headman relies heavily on their advice. Most councilmen are middle aged; few are over 50 years
[575] old. Since the head of the Women's Association and the nurse are members, there are at least two female representatives. The youngest councilman is usually the head of the Young People's Association.

623 It is apparent that leadership in the community is always exercised
555

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by a limited group. The council represents almost all potential leaders. Education and experience in the outside world are the most important qualifications. This is a change from the old days when wealth was also an important factor. An example of a member of township assembly and village council is the man who lived for many years in Brazil (see Chapter 1, p. 374). His leadership is widely recognized and partly due to his successful use of modern farming techniques. Another village leader is a graduate of an agricultural high school, a man of superior intelligence and qualifications who ranked high in an island-wide civil service examination. Another former headman, and now a council member, was born and raised in Japan of Okinawan parents. Although unfamiliar with local dialect and practices, he is well versed in things Japanese and is a financial expert.

The full village council seldom meets. Instead, local matters are discussed among a core of its most active leaders. Noncouncil members, such as the postmaster, policeman, or teachers, may be invited to some meetings. A discussion may start because several villagers want to set aside a special day during which nobody is permitted to go to the mountains to cut firewood, so that more work can be done in the fields. Such a proposal, if approved by the committee of council members, need not be brought before the entire council. Since no formal vote is taken by the council as a rule, friendly discussions decide the issue. Such a decision is then taken directly to a meeting of registered household heads which is held monthly or whenever there are a number of matters to be discussed and voted on. They are presented point by point, first by the headman, next by one or more council members; then discussion is opened to the whole meeting and eventually a vote is taken. This is done in a very relaxed manner and without actually counting the votes, since discussions have continued until there is a general consensus in the group.

Minor matters of immediate importance, such as tax collections, plans for celebrating a holiday, or maintenance work on roads and ditches in parts of the village, are taken up between the headman and wardens in weekly meetings.

The household head meeting is attended by many women who are either registered household heads or have been sent by their husbands or fathers as representatives. Some men may actually be unable to attend; others are disinterested. Failure to send any family representative over 18 years old to a village meeting results in a fine of 20 yen. At one meeting when it seemed as if more women than men were present, the headman joked, "Let's call it a Women's Association Meeting." The women answered, "We are just nice to our husbands, so we

623 attend." As on all occasions women usually sit together on one side or in the rear. Few of them participate during discussions. The most active spokesmen for the women are the head of the Women's Association and one or two of her close assistants. If a discussion concerns such matters as liquor and food for celebrating certain holidays, a woman may speak [854] up. Mothers bring their infants along[1] and hold them in their arms or nurse them when they get restless. Sometimes a child feels uncomfortable and starts crying, and the mother is forced to leave the room.

554 In general, Taira people do not enjoy being leaders or playing a 157 dominating role. There are no bosses who attempt to force issues or 621 dictate policies. Even people who have definite ideas on how to effect changes would not attempt to assume full responsibility by disregarding the advice of others. "Power" is not associated with responsible positions and village leadership. The headman and clerk perform a duty, often loathed by them and never too highly rewarded by others. A man commands respect for his education, age, sound advice, and exemplary behavior, not for the office he holds. Moreover, all villagers are friendly neighbors, and the man who is presently headman still [632] remains a relative or neighbor to everybody. There is more prestige associated with township offices. The mayor, who holds the highest position, is a man of age and experience; he commands a great deal of respect and has been elected to that office because of the high esteem in which he is held. Occasionally one hears of power hungry persons who are unscrupulous and authoritarian, but they are rare.

FORMAL CONTROL

625 Formal control of law and order is in the hands of the police. A detachment of the Hentona district police is located in the village, and one policeman is constantly stationed there. He lives with his family in [206] a building which also has a small office. Recently a telephone with direct connections to Hentona was installed. The policeman and his wife are from another township.

[166] The policeman's main duty, according to villagers, is to protect them from the occasional outside burglars or from fugitives from the south who come north to hide in the woods. The announcement that such a person is on the loose creates much excitement and anxiety. A [167] second important duty is the control of the shore line. Smugglers and illegal entrants from the Japanese island of Yoron, just to the north of Okinawa, land along the coast. Although one man with only a bicycle can hardly control effectively several miles of coastline, since the only road to the outer world leads through Taira, the policeman

[1] [i.e. - to the household head meeting - ANALYST]

625 went out for fugitives from the south, he would accompany the police-
[632] mar or investigate himself. In cases of death, both he and the police-
[647] ma[illegible] have to make a report.

The Young People's Association may serve as a vigilante in emer-
[575] gencies such as fires, floods, tornadoes, and other disasters. When a
[731] military jeep was reported to have been stolen near Naha and driven on the dead-end road running north, the young people in all villages on the way erected road blocks and were ready to help catch the thief. The group would act together in a similar fashion at any threat from outsiders.

622 The headman can only enforce local ordinances insofar as he is
681 able to persuade people to comply. He is not concerned directly with
[625] crime or disturbance of the peace. Exceptions are such matters as stealing sugar cane or letting chickens run loose so that they enter every yard. For such acts, money fines can be imposed. One warden still has a tag which used to be given to the man whose chickens ran around freely. The offender had to pay the fine and keep the tag until he detected someone else's chicken running loose. Then he could pass the
[626] tag on to that person. Such measures are no longer used. But the underlying principle of public censure and fear of ridicule continues to operate in village social control.

●623 Public censure is used along with fines to ensure attendance at vil-
626 lage meetings. Roll call is taken before each meeting so that the ab-
[681] sence of individuals is made known to the whole group. Similarly, when tax collections became more and more delinquent, it was decided to have ward meetings in which everybody would be reminded in public to pay his share. Those who were unable to do so would have to state their reasons. As soon as this new plan was announced, several people got up during the meeting to pay outstanding amounts to the head-
872 man. The school uses similar devices to achieve better attendance and scholarship. During home visit week, about once a year, a meeting is held for all parents and the statistics for attendance for each village are read as well as scholastic performances for each community.

INFORMAL CONTROL

156
626 What other people might think is uppermost on everybody's mind.
[867] Children are reminded by their mothers not to play alone lest people would think they are unpopular. They are told not to fight lest others think badly of them or make them responsible for the consequences. Censure by gossip is common, but criticism is seldom made directly to a person's face, and the target of extensive gossip is often unaware of it.

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602 476 on one's mother's side and, after marriage, the wife's family. In seeking mutual assistance for rice planting, house building and other undertakings, such relatives may be approached. In other words, kin, neighbors, and members of the same geographical section of the village participate almost equally in mutual assistance groups. Maternal relatives join in family celebrations and in the discussion of family matters. Since many decisions are made jointly with the help of relatives, there are frequent occasions for the kindred to gather in the evening at one house or another.

561 Each Okinawan also belongs to an age group. As will be described in the section on socialization, beginning at kindergarten an Okinawan becomes associated with a group of boys and girls who will remain his 575 653 companions through school. As a member of junior high school he will join the formal Student's Association, which is responsible for certain community projects. High school students and all unmarried young adults belong to the Young People's Association, which is both a social group and a cooperative work group.

575 185 [562] After marriage there are several associations which one may join. Adult married women who are under 57 belong to the Women's Association, which is affiliated with an island organization dedicated to "modernizing" women's lives. The organization is lead by a few women who are in contact with the district and island organization. They attempt at semisocial gatherings to introduce changes aimed at easing [262] the burdens of daily life and the pressure of poverty. For example, they are trying to influence the women to return to making their own bean paste rather than spending precious cash. The leaders show the women how to make bean paste and encourage them to set aside one work-free day a month to catch up with neglected housework. Many of the efforts of the organization, however, are not too successful. Most women go back to their homes and find that the accustomed ways are easier to follow. One has learned to live with economic pressures and tradition and established custom is a strong force. So the few forward-looking women have a difficult task in rallying others.

Both adult married males and females may also join an organization similar in objective—the Home Improvement group. Although the men who are village leaders belong to this association, the majority of the members are the same women who are leaders in the Women's Association.

575 887 623 Before World War II there was an association of older men.* Although this group seldom, if ever, meets, it still sends a representative to the village council and to a few village functions.

* Apparently of relatively recent origin.

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the wife takes charge of household funds while her husband controls larger spendings.

Many quarrels between couples originate from financial matters. Disagreements happen frequently when a husband returns home intoxicated late at night. His wife may blame him for using money which she has put aside for a special purchase; from this incident the argument turns to family finances in general. As words become more heated, the woman holds her own, telling her husband in no uncertain terms that he is a squanderer. Some husbands settle such an argument by hitting their wives.

Decisions are seldom made by one person in the family. The more important the issue involved, the more people within the family are consulted. A husband and wife may discuss whether to buy or sell a pig and make a joint decision. They also decide mutually on the buying of seed rice and other agricultural matters. Men concern themselves with the building of new structures or the addition to old ones. On the other hand, women make decisions affecting the daily life of children. They determine if a child needs new clothes, if he should be taken to the doctor, or accompany the mother on a shopping trip to the city. Some fathers take an interest in their children's study habits and accomplishments at school, but few are consistent in supervising their children in this respect. Here, too, mothers seem to have a much greater influence. Girls are likely to receive even less attention from their fathers than boys. In cases of decisions that can vitally affect the future of the whole household, members of the husband's and wife's family, if they live in the village, gather to discuss plans.

Although women are less active politically than men, they participate in village meetings as representatives for their families. With the exception of the Women's Association leaders, their participation is more passive than that of the men. But although they seldom speak in public and sit together at the back of the meeting, women nevertheless exert a great deal of influence on community affairs. Their influence is felt even more in meetings of mutual finance associations.

It is unlikely at this point that a woman in the village would run for political office. Several recent developments, however, indicate a steady increase in their political participation. The headman who was elected to office in 1955 is responsible for an innovation which reflects this trend. He selected his clerk by means of a competitive examination which was open to both young men and young women. Two girls who had graduated from high school were among the candidates. They were defeated by a young man to whom the job was given because of

562 666 his high score. Under American influence, universal suffrage and equal representation have been introduced and formally adopted in some village affairs, although the household head vote—traditionally mostly male—is still maintained in many cases.

562 575 The Women's Association is the main force behind the attempts to give women greater equality. The spokesmen for this group do not proclaim equality for women as such as the important goal but express hopes that women's life can be made easier by reducing their work load and providing more conveniences for them, such as better stoves. Attempts are made to give a woman more time to spend at home instead of in forests or fields and to reduce the expenses involved in preparing for holidays and special celebrations. The opinions of the Women's Association carry weight in village affairs. This, as one old woman pointed out, is a considerable change from earlier times. There had been a Women's Association before the war, but [623] women were still barred from participation in village meetings at that time, and the only place where they could make themselves heard in village matters was at the meeting of the individuals required to do periodic labor for the village.

562 527 595 [177] The situation at the time of fieldwork with regard to the attempts of women to gain more recognition and the role which men play in this respect is illustrated by a celebration of Mother's Day—an event which came to Taira quite recently from the outside. The women decided to observe it by taking off from their daily duties during the afternoon. The Women's Association made all arrangements, so that it was not a day dedicated by children or adult men to the mothers, but a day that the mothers celebrated themselves. Nevertheless, for the meeting at the old warehouse, where mats had been spread and food prepared, there were also tables arranged for the male village officials, such as the headman, village council members, and the policeman. They started the affair by treating the women to a few speeches in which the importance of motherhood was eulogized by such observations as: "A man can be great only if he has a mother who is making him great," and (from the policeman): "Mothers are an important factor in preventing juvenile delinquency." After this initial hour-long introduction, the leader of the Women's Association declared that festivities could now begin and that she "did not care how much sake the women drank as long as they were happy on this day." The children, who had been told by their teachers to help their mothers on this day by cleaning house and freeing them from some of their chores, gathered near the building, received some feast food and played as usual, and men—with the exception of the invited officials—worked

One of his major responsibilities to the township office is tax collection within the village; yet, his actual powers are slight, as nearly all of his official acts are first sanctioned by the villagers or the township office. It seemed to the author that the chief role of the 'kuchō' was as an intermediary between the people and the township office or as an agent for the latter, rather than as an administrator. It would seem that the payment of his salary by the township instead of by the village is symbolic of his actual role. 622 [651] [632]

Assisting the 'kuchō' are several officers the first of which is the assistant mayor ('fuku-kuchō') who is elected at the same time as the mayor and serves for one year. He is paid ¥480 ($4.00) per month, and like the mayor he must be over 27 and a household head. In the absence of the mayor he functions in his place, and on all other occasions he assists him in his work. A village clerk ('shōki') is also elected at the same time as the 'kuchō', and serves for a term of one year; he is paid a salary of ¥700 ($5.83) each month. The main qualifications for this position are that one have a fair amount of education and a good mastery of characters for writing. The job holds little appeal since it demands much of the individual's time and affords little in the way of prestige or pay. In Kanegusuku-ku in December of 1953 three elections were held in an effort to fill this position before someone finally and quite reluctantly accepted it. 624 [465] [465]

An advisory body of four councillors ('hyōgiin') assists the mayor in his administration; they represent each of the four neighborhoods or districts of the village. They are elected at the same time as the mayor, serve for one year, and receive a salary of ¥20 (17¢) per meeting. According to the villagers this body has replaced the earlier yuushi which was an unelected advisory council made up of former village officials, the village equivalent of elder statesmen. The 'kuchō' never undertakes an independent course of action; he first consults the 'hyōgiin' and obtains their approval and suggestions before initiating action. 623 [465]

Each village of Kanegusuku-son elects two men to represent it in the township ('son') assembly ('sonkai'); they are elected for a term of four years. Older, mature men who have held several official positions are always selected. They also play a part in village administration and are considered village officials. At all meetings they sit with the officials, and their opinion is much valued. 624 632

All matters of real importance are submitted to the household heads who form the real body politic within the village. The electorate for the village consists exclusively of household heads; to vote in a village election one must be a household head or one appointed by him to vote in his place, but in township and national elections universal suffrage obtains. At one village election which the author witnessed in December of 1953 balloting began as soon as the meeting was called to order without any preliminary speeches or nominations. It was later stated that the election and likely candidates had been informally discussed among the village leaders and household heads so that there was no need for preliminaries. The same situation seemed to prevail when meetings were held to discuss matters of general concern; the apparent unanimity of opinion and agreement indicated that informal concordance had been reached well in advance of formal discussion and decision. 621 592 666